

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 HA-05 ACDA-12 /090 W
-----083329 231036Z /12

O 230950Z AUG 78 ZFF4

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 2241

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 4922

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV, PORG, SF, WA

SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: SAG PROTESTS SWAPO ATTACK ON KATIMA MULILO

REF: PRETORIA 4916

1. SAG DEPT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS SECRETARY BRAND FOURIE
CALLED THE PRETORIA FIVE IN AT 0900 THIS MORNING TO DISCUSS
THE REPORTED SWAPO BOMBARDMENT OF KATIMA MULILO IN THE
CAPRIVI STRIP. FOURIE SAID FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA WOULD
HAVE TALKED TO US HIMSELF BUT HAD TO LEAVE EARLY THIS
MORNING TO ATTEND THE NATIONAL PARTY CONGRESS IN EAST
LONDON.

2. FOURIE BEGAN BY NOTING THAT THE FIVE WOULD RECALL
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THAT BOTHA HAD INFORMED THEM ON TWO OR THREE OCCASIONS
THAT THE SAG KNEW AN ATTACK WAS BEING PLANNED FROM
ACROSS THE RIVER IN ZAMBIA AGAINST KATIMA MULILO.
(WHEN I SAID I COULD RECALL NO SPECIFIC MENTION OF
KATIMA MULILO AS OPPOSED TO THE GENERAL THREAT OF AN
ATTACK, FOURIE SAID, AND THREE OF THE OTHER FOUR
CONFIRMED, THAT KATIMA MULILO HAD BEEN MENTIONED BEFORE

MY ARRIVAL, ABOUT THE TIME OF THE CASSINGA RAID OR EARLIER.) FOURIE SAID THAT UN ADVISOR GENERAL PHILLIP, AND APPARENTLY ALSO MR. AHTISAARI, HAD BEEN GIVEN SPECIFIC INFORMATION ABOUT SWAPO TROOPS BEING MOVED UP TO THE BORDER.

3. FOURIE THEN MADE A POINT OF THE FACT THAT THE WESTERN FIVE'S APPEAL TO SWAPO AND OTHER PARTIES HAD OBVIOUSLY NOT HAD THE DESIRED FAVORABLE RESULT. HE CHARACTERIZED THE LATEST INCIDENT AS ONE OF A PROGRESSIVE SERIES OF ACTS SHOWING GROWING ARROGANCE ON SWAPO'S PART WHICH WAS TAKEN IN A VERY SERIOUS LIGHT BY THE SAG.

4. FOURIE SAID ADMINISTRATOR GENERAL STEYN WAS FLYING UP TO KATIMA MULILO TO LOOK INTO THE SIUTATION. HE WAS NOT SURE HOW MANY DEAD AND WOUNDED THERE WERE. THE BOMBARDMENT, BY ROCKETS AND ARTILLERY, STARTED AT 0115 THIS MORNING "AND RESUMED SOME TIME LATER." HE WAS AWAITING FURTHER REPORTS REGARDING ZAMBIAN DEFENCE FORCE INVOLVEMENT IN THE RAID, AS REPORTED BY SABC, BUT COULD NOT CONFIRM THE SABC REPORTS AT THIS TIME. HE ALSO DID NOT KNOW WHAT COUNTERACTION CAME FROM THE SADF, ALTHOUGH THE SABC REPORTED THAT THE SADF HAD RETURNED THE FIRE.

5. ASKED WHETHER ANY OF THE RESIDUAL UN PERSONNEL LEFT
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BEHIND BY AHTISAARI WERE IN KATIMA MULILO, FOURIE DID NOT KNOW, BUT LATER HE CALLED THE GERMAN AMBASSADOR TO REPORT THAT THE SENIOR UN MAN, NAMED RIDDELL, HAD BEEN INVITED TO GO WITH STEYN TO VISIT THE TOWN BUT DECLINED AND HAD NO MANDATE TO ACCEPT SUCH AN INVITATION.

6. FOURIE SAID "OFF THE RECORD" THAT HE DID NOT THINK THIS INCIDENT WILL BE TAKEN "LYING DOWN". THE FIVE ALL URGED THAT, WHILE WE UNDERSTOOD HOW DIFFICULT IT MIGHT BE, RESTRAINT CONTINUED TO BE OF THE GREATEST IMPORTANCE AT THIS DELICATE JUNCTURE. FOURIE MADE THE EXPECTED COMPLAINTS ABOUT ARROGANCE AND LACK OF RESTRAINT ON THE OTHER SIDE, ARGUING THAT THERE WAS ONLY ONE THING THESE PEOPLE UNDERSTOOD. WE URGED THAT IT WOULD BE MUCH EASIER FOR ALL INVOLVED TO INSIST ON PEACE ONCE A SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION HAD BEEN PASSED TO IMPLEMENT THE SETTLEMENT PROPOSAL AND INSTITUTE A CEASE FIRE. "I CAN TELL YOU" FOURIE REPLIED BITTERLY, "THAT SWAPO WON'T OBSERVE A CEASE FIRE AND THEY WON'T BE MONITORED ON THE OTHER SIDE." HE SPOKE SEVERAL TIMES OF THE BUILD-UP ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BORDER (TO WHICH UK AMBASSADOR SCOTT NOTED THAT TO BE FAIR, FOURIE HAD TO AGREE THAT

THE SAG HAD BUILT UP ITS FORCES ON THE NAMIBIAN SIDE OF THE BORDER), AND ALSO NOTED THAT THE ZAMBIANS COULD DO LITTLE TO CONTROL THE SWAPO AND RHODESIAN FORCES IN THEIR COUNTRY.

6. THE MEETING LASTED ABOUT 25 MINUTES, AND THE FIVE CONCLUDED THE MEETING BY TELLING FOURIE WE WOULD REPORT HIS DEMARCHE TO OUR GOVERNMENTS. ON THE WAY OUT WE AGREED THAT THERE WAS NO NEED FOR A JOINT REPORT OR ASSESSMENT. AS SCOTT COMMENTED, WE NEED THIS INCIDENT LIKE A HOLE IN THE HEAD.
EDMONDSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INVASIONS, COMBAT OPERATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978PRETOR04922
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780344-0764
Format: TEL
From: PRETORIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780833/aaaabayb.tel
Line Count: 127
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 2fc5305d-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 PRETORIA 4916
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1647776
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NAMIBIA: SAG PROTESTS SWAPO ATTACK ON KATIMA MULILO
TAGS: PDEV, PORO, MOPS, SF, WA, SWAPO
To: STATE USUN NEW YORK
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/2fc5305d-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014